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25 April 1967

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Acting Director, Office of Current Intelligence

**SUBJECT :** OBI Memo of 19 April on Lateness of OCI's MIS General Survey Contributions

1. OCI's memo and its attachment are in general accurate and just. Minor parts of its charge against OCI can be faulted or explained away as due to factors entirely beyond OCI's control, but these parts are more than counterbalanced by other OCI shortcomings which do not show up in OCI's 17 April record. Our promised remedial measures, therefore, need to focus on the basic situation of MIS production and not simply on the immediate emergency as did the authorization of overtime last year to catch up arrears of Section 57 production. A fuller discussion of the FY 1967 production situation appears in Annex A, OCI's MIS Production in FY 1967.

2. For such an extensive slippage on schedules, no single explanation is adequate, but probably the nearest thing to a comprehensive cause is the prevalent OCI assumption that anything which can be termed "current intelligence" automatically takes priority over anything called "research." So far as the MIS is concerned, this assumption can be seen reflected in

- (a) the relative unconcern of Area Chiefs over the MIS except as a program consuming manpower (not as a program providing a substantial part of their T.O.s);
- (b) the supervisor who, with very little heart-searching, "borrows" part or all of an analyst's time from an MIS assignment for a current intelligence job;
- (c) the widespread view of analysts that the MIS is grubby "lower class" work, and that performance on it, whether good or bad, is time wasted so far as one's career is concerned;
- (d) the supervisor who fosters this analyst attitude by parading his own lack of interest in and respect for the MIS, and by assigning to MIS work his less effective personnel;
- (e) the more temperate supervisor who nevertheless seems to feel no more immediate responsibility for a MIS draft produced by his component than he would for a MIS draft circulated by OWS for his comment.

3. Actually, prevailing OCI attitudes regarding "current intelligence" production would seem to need re-examination for other reasons beside their effect on MIS production--the Office having been criticized in the

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Cunningham Report for, in effect, assuming that the requirement to watch a situation means to publish on it, and for putting out what is essentially reference material in the guise of current intelligence. (Annex B-1 and B-2 recall two particular examples of these tendencies.) What seems to be needed is a clarification of OCI's functions and the relationship of its various publications to these functions, so that the D/OCI (or his immediate representative) can effectively ask of any projected claimant on OCI manpower, "What is the primary purpose of this document?" The operative term in the preceding sentence is "effectively ask"--i.e., ask beforehand and require some indication of the manhours involved, since by the time the final draft of the document reaches the front office the manpower has already been spent and there is then little that the D/OCI can then do except alter the item's category, format, distribution or length. The larger question of OCI's publications is of course in many respects irrelevant to the immediate MIS problem (Annex C, OCI Publications and Their Purpose, contains a few observations on this larger subject) but the manpower which other publications consume is directly relevant. A striking example of such manpower competition may be noted from the Near East-South Asia page of the 24 April number of OCI's "Projects in Progress," where the OCI regional branch which is probably in the worst shape of any on its MIS commitments undertakes to update the Middle East Oil Handbook for State Department's benefit.

4. As regards means of remedying the MIS situation, unsupported exhortation has already been sufficiently tried. It is assumed, furthermore, that the total supply of OCI manpower will not expand significantly in the near future. Realistic remedial measures would therefore seem to fall into three categories: (a) more effective controls on other OCI publications which compete with the MIS for manpower; (b) more effective front office controls on those actually disposing of the MIS's manpower; (c) some re-examination of the present allocation of manpower between the various OCI regional components.

5. A control system on OCI publications which is concerned simply with increasing the manpower available for the MIS (disregarding for the moment other considerations such as protecting the OCI image) might ignore items of publication which consume no significant amount of manpower. Thus, clearance would be routine on any projected item which either (a) was in response to a genuine, properly channeled demand from higher up, or (b) would require less than a specified amount--say two days--of professional manpower to produce. Projected items meeting neither of these criteria would need an explicit statement for the D/OCI's review as to (a) their primary purpose, (b) other material available on the subject, and (c) the anticipated manhour investment involved.

6. Some tightening up is probably advisable in the reporting procedures on OCI's MIS production. These procedures (described with illustrations in Annex D, Present MIS Reporting Procedures in OCI) are at present hooked in only indirectly to the line-of-command structure, where the manpower allocations must actually be made. Communications on scheduling and progress reporting flow between the SA/R's office and the

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five special assistants for research in the regional producing components; copies of important communications are supplied to the line-of-command persons concerned, but the regional special assistant is left to make the specific arrangements, which usually involve fairly detailed technical considerations. Line-of-command supervisors above branch chief probably do not have the time to concern themselves with the MIS's details, but all those controlling OCI's manpower need to recognize their responsibility for the MIS in a more positive way than many of them seem to have done to date. (It is perhaps symptomatic that, to the best of my recollection, no one has ever inquired of me at Fitness Report time about a supervisor's MIS record.) The five regional special assistants for research are the key figures in the operation because of their combination of extensive area knowledge and technical MIS know-how. Though they have sometimes been temporarily diverted to a non-MIS assignment at a critical point in MIS production, they are, in my view, generally doing an effective job within the limits of their authority. But pressure for reform must come from where the real authority is. Two relatively simple devices are suggested to tighten OCI's administration of its MIS program:

- (a) an official statement that the Fitness Reports on all supervisors are to take into account their components' performance on the MIS as well as current intelligence;
- (b) in cases where an MIS draft is more than one week delinquent in delivery to the SA/R's office, a written explanation is to go up to the D/OCI signed by all the line-of-command supervisors involved (not by the Special Assistant for Research on the Area's behalf, as occurred in one instance where this procedure was applied last summer); this report is also to contain a firm date for the delivery of the delinquent section.

7. As regards allocation of manpower between regional components, it is difficult for an outsider to make appraisals, but the Africa Division figures most prominently in the OSI list of 17 April and it has long seemed to me to face more genuine manpower shortages than any other regional component. It may be recalled that a rough manpower comparison was made between Africa and Latin America in a memo of 30 March 1956 by this office in response to a protest from the then Latin America Division over one of its MIS commitments:

1 March 1956 on duty strength		Fiscal Year 1957 General Surveys Sec 57a	
Latin America Div	30 professionals	6 (18 sections)	3
Africa Div	19 professionals	3 (24 sections)	2

Both personnel totals and MIS commitments have changed somewhat since then and lists of on-duty personnel are no longer published for the various divisions, but recent publication levels in most OCI media would suggest that Africa is still understaffed in comparison to the Western

Neisphere. (Over the past six or eight months, for example, we have either been under-reporting Nigeria or over-reporting Ecuador.) These are of course not the only regions where it might be appropriate to re-examine how well on-duty manpower accords with actual publication demands on the region.

8. One general point is relevant in conclusion. During the second quarter of FY 68, OCI can expect some relief on the manpower load of the MIS from a system of "inputs" to the more technical parts of the General Survey Section 4 (Sociological) which, after some prodding from OCI, GSI has arranged for us to receive on an experimental basis from Census and Labor. Since these will cost GSI some hard cash, it will (not unreasonably) expect in return to see our consequent manpower savings reflected in improvement on MIS deliveries. Continuation and expansion of the experiment, indeed, could well depend on such improvement.

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[REDACTED]  
Special Assistant for Research  
Office of Current Intelligence

Attachments:

- ANNEX A - OCI's MIS Production in FY 1967
- ANNEX B-1 - JWM memo of 22 Dec 66 to D/OCI
- ANNEX B-2 - JWM memo of 16 Feb 67 to D/OCI
- ANNEX C - OCI Publications and Their Purpose
- ANNEX D - Present MIS Reporting Procedures in OCI (with illustrative memos and reports)